

Caesura

I remember hearing about them, the babies
and though I'd never held such a seed
of them. Five children with ghost-spaces
unbaptized souls went to Limbo,
so I saw them spread like mica
and in the gauze of grasshoppers
through summer grass.
a barn cat lick her living kittens
sacked. Little grapes, their mother's
When I bled, I locked the bathroom door.
frame of my only ultrasound inside
of The Secret Garden. Little unblossom,
I'm not religious anymore, but I grew up
the grandfatherly one who knew I was bad
but loved me anyway, and I could always talk to.
to break in the cathedral of my sleeping daughters,
gauzed in white-noise, a halo of nightlight.
some variation of *Don't you dare*, and *Please*.
The middle brother. So little now,
the word God. They know earth and death
that silent sleight of hand replace
of wings. They've seen me clutch
only to crush a mosquito against
with our family's mingled blood.
doesn't mean to be good, only powerful
After our cat died my oldest kept asking
but where is she? First, I spun a heaven-place,
stood her barefoot in the garden and said
The dirt is full of root and bone.
Lie down, back to summer grass. Feel
into that star-spread black expanse.
the way the earth holds us

my Grandma never had,
in my body, I felt the want
between. She believed
which to me meant low,
in the soil beneath her roses,
that rose with every step
On my Grandma's ranch, I watched
clean, leaving some still
warmth unreplaced by their own.
Later, I pressed a still-
my Grandma's copy
little mausoleum.
with God,
sometimes,
It's a hard habit
that consecrated dark
My prayers are always
Somehow, I know he was a boy.
so nothing. My daughters don't know
and rain. They've watched
a caterpillar with an iridescent bud
a spider between paper and a plastic cup,
their bedroom wall, its body smeared
They are learning to be merciful
enough to choose.
Where is she? I know she's dead
then I changed my mind,
Here, look down.
Oh, my darlings we are so small.
how we are always falling
And feel too
and we are held.

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